

COVID-19 RESPONSE – ARRANGEMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES IN ISOLATION – WHO ARE NOT ILL – CANNOT WORK FROM HOME

Practice, Procedures and Standards No. 4. Operative date: 26 July 2022

Pursuant to s 15(1)(b) of the State Service Act 2000, I hereby direct that the following arrangements and requirements, set out in this Practices, Procedures and Standards document apply.



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Issued by the Director, State Service Management Office under delegation from the Head of the State Service

Date: 26 July 2022

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1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Practice, Procedure and Standard (PPS) is to provide guidance to agencies in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic where employees test positive for COVID-19, are not ill, cannot work from home and are otherwise “ready, willing and able to work”.
- 1.2 This PPS does not override award and agreement entitlements, or arrangements covered by the *State Service Regulations 2021 – Leave because of COVID-19 (Regulation 24)*.

- 1.3 This PPS should be read in conjunction with the COVID-19 leave scenarios document as updated by the State Service Management Office (SSMO), from time to time and available at <https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/ssmo/coronavirus>. Further changes may be made as required as the COVID-19 pandemic develops.
- 1.4 The PPS should be read in conjunction with advice from the Tasmanian Director of Public Health and all requirements of any applicable Public Health Direction or Order as amended from time to time.

2. Date of Operation

- 2.1 This PPS, issued under s 15(1)(b) of the *State Service Act 2000* commences on 26th July 2022 and continues until such time as it is revoked.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 SSMO will support agencies in the application of this PPS.
- 3.2 Agencies will support employees in the application of this PPS.

4. Application of this PPS

- 4.1 Who is covered?

All employees (including fixed-term, casual, seasonal, sessional and relief employees) and officers (as defined) employed under the *State Service Act 2000* are covered by this PPS.

- 4.2 Employees with reduced capacity to work flexibly including working from home

While it is preferable that employees who remain “ready, willing and able to work” work flexibly or from home, it is recognised that there are a number of employees, working in particular areas and professions across the Tasmanian State Service, who have limited or no capacity to work flexibly or from home including, but not limited to, the following front-line workers who provide critical and essential services to the Tasmanian community:

- Health workforce
- Emergency Services
- BioSecurity Services

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- Service Tasmania
- Teaching Services
- Correctional Services
- Children and Youth Services.

4.3 Absence Arrangements – Employee tests positive for COVID-19 but remains “ready, willing and able to work”:

An employee is to continue being paid what they otherwise would have been paid during a period of absence from work (including relevant shift penalties and allowances that would have been paid for the period) where the following circumstances apply:

1. the employee tests positive for COVID-19; and
2. is asymptomatic or has very mild symptoms, and otherwise remains “ready, willing and able to work”; and
3. is required to isolate in accordance with the relevant Public Health Direction or Order; and
4. due to the nature of the employee’s role is unable to work from home.

If the employee becomes ill (and therefore not fit for duty) during the period of the absence the employee is then entitled to access personal leave in accordance with the relevant award provisions. If the employee’s personal leave is exhausted, the employee is entitled to access Leave because of COVID-19 as provided under Regulation 24 of the *State Service Regulations 2021*.

4.4 Absence Arrangements – Workplace closures

An employee is to continue being paid what they otherwise would have been paid during a period of absence from work (including relevant shift penalties and allowances that would have been paid for the period) where the following circumstances apply:

1. the employee is “ready, willing and able to work”; and
2. the employee’s place of work has closed; and
3. due to the nature of the employee’s role, the employee is unable to work in an alternate location or from home.

4.5 Returning to Work

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An employee who is unable to attend work because they have tested positive to COVID-19, but remains “ready, willing and able to work”, may return to work on completion of the relevant period of isolation in accordance with the relevant Public Health requirements.

An employee who is unable to attend work due to the workplace closure may return to work when the workplace is no longer closed.

4.6 Managing personal health and wellbeing

The health and safety of employees is our highest priority. It is important for employees to prioritise their wellbeing during these times. Employees who are working from home during these times should discuss any issues with their manager.

4.7 Notice and Evidentiary Requirements

An employee is to advise their manager as soon as possible once they become aware that they are unable to attend the workplace due to testing positive to COVID-19.

An employee who tests positive for COVID-19 but remains “ready, willing and able to work” is required to provide the employer with evidence that they are unable to attend the workplace as a result of their positive test result. Evidence of a positive COVID-19 test result may include registration of a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) result on the Public Health Website or notification from Public Health of a PCR test result.

5. Reporting Requirements

5.1 Each period of absence in accordance with this PPS is to be recorded by the Agency as ‘Absent due to COVID-19’ and a code is to be established for this purpose.

5.2 Agencies may be requested by the Director, State Service Management Office to report on the number of absences and the length for reporting purposes.

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